

XXXVI.—Notices of Recent Ornithological Publications.

1. ENGLISH.

THE Twentieth part of Mr. Gould's 'Birds of Asia' made its appearance on the 1st of April last. It contains representations of the following :—

Falco babylonicus. Mesopotamia, India.	Cecropis daurica. Altai, Dauria, China.
—— sacer. N. Asia, Himalaya.	—— erythropygia. India.
—— lanarius. Palestine to Punjab.	—— hyperythra. Ceylon.
Cerionis satyra. Nepaul, Sikkim, Bhotan.	Delichon nipalensis. Nepaul.
Salpornis spilonota. Oude, Behar, Chanda.	Hypurolepis domicola. Nilgherries, Ceylon, Borneo.
Malacoturnix superciliosus. Mus- soorie.	Lagenoplastes fluvicola. Punjab, Cashmere.
Hesperiphona affinis. W. Himalaya.	Melanochlora sultanea. Himalaya to Sumatra.
Cecropis rufula. Palestine.	Callene albiventris. S. India.

Considering the vast host of Asiatic species which have never been figured, we must say we think that Mr. Gould would be more completely consulting the progress of ornithology, if he gave them a preference in selecting the subjects of his magnificent plates. A large proportion of those in the above list have been before figured—some of them many times, and some of them quite recently. Surely it would be time enough to refigure species when all those already unfigured, or only misfigured, were done with. The *Malacoturnix superciliosus* above mentioned is the same species as that called by Mr. Blyth in our last year's volume (*Ibis*, 1867, pp. 313, 314) *Malacortyx superciliaris*, our contributor having, in the space of two months, changed both the generic and specific names, the latter, however, no doubt by a mere slip of the pen. *Hypurolepis* is a new generic name proposed in place of Lesson's *Herse*, which is said to have been previously appropriated by Oken.

It is with extreme satisfaction that we have to notice, and recommend to our readers, Mr. Sharpe's 'Monograph of the *Alcedinidæ*,' of which the first part has lately appeared*. We

* A Monograph of the *Alcedinidæ* or Kingfishers, by R. B. SHARPE. The plates drawn and lithographed by Mr. J. G. KEULEMANS. Part i. July 1st, 1868. London: Roy. 8vo.

cannot in ornithology recollect another instance of a comparatively unknown author entertaining a design so ambitious, and, as far as we can at present judge, completely fulfilling the most sanguine expectation. As the work proceeds we shall, no doubt, often have occasion to mention it; but its meritorious features should at once be made known. The letterpress evinces an amount of care in its preparation which would be creditable to many older and more practised ornithologists. The synonymy and diagnosis of the various species treated, seem to be very well given; and such particulars of their habits as can be gathered from published or unpublished sources are furnished. The plates are exceedingly well drawn and carefully coloured, proving the artist to be a most correct observer of bird-life. The present number contains a figure of *Ceyx wallacii*, lately described as a new species in the Zoological 'Proceedings' by the author, it having been formerly confounded with *C. lepida*. We sincerely trust that Mr. Sharpe may obtain the encouragement his effort deserves, and, by the success of the present undertaking, be induced to continue a series of similar Monographs, than which there could be no more agreeable possession to the ornithologist.

Fully appreciating the spirit which prompted Mr. Collingwood to undertake a voyage to the China seas, we must confess that his book on the subject* is rather disappointing to an ornithologist. We knew, indeed, that he was condescending to animals of low degree; but, still, birds have a place in marine zoology, and we had been in hopes of finding more respecting them in this work. Of those that are occasionally mentioned, some are not correctly named. For instance, though while nearing the Straits of Malacca the author had some hesitation as to whether the Gannets he saw (p. 13) were really *Sula alba*, arrived at Pratas Island (p. 31) he rashly omits the warning mark of doubt, and roundly calls the species by that name, which our

* Rambles of a Naturalist on the shores and waters of the China Seas: being Observations in Natural History during a voyage to China, Formosa, Borneo, Singapore, etc., made in Her Majesty's Vessels in 1866 and 1867. By CUTHBERT COLLINGWOOD, M.A., M.B., F.L.S., &c. London: 1868. 8vo, pp. 445.

readers scarcely require to be told is but a synonym of *S. bassana*, which certainly does not occur in those waters. The "Wide-awakes" of Ascension he more prudently leaves undetermined (pp. 424-426), though most ornithologists know that by that nickname the British sailor commonly means *Sterna fuliginosa* (cf. *suprà*, p. 286). It can hardly be, too, that Mr. Collingwood "saw, and heard sing, the Chaffinch (*Fringilla cælebs*)," at Fayal, as he states (p. 430); no doubt the bird was *F. moreleti* (Ibis, 1866, p. 97). Still, with all these slight blemishes, the book is very interesting; and if an ornithologist can venture to cast the eye of affection on nudibranchiate *Mollusca*, flirt with *Holothuræ*, dally with a *Comatula*, or submit to the embraces of a chain of *Salpæ*, without being false to his own wedded love, he will greatly enjoy the author's pages. We entirely agree, as indeed all naturalists must, with his concluding regrets as to the common neglect of the wonderful advantages which fall to the lot of so many of our naval officers, whether bearing Her Majesty's commission, or engaged in the mercantile marine. In connexion with this last service, Mr. Collingwood's labours are well known; and we only trust that, some day, they will be of good effect.

It would be out of place here to dwell at any length upon Mr. Parker's recent work published by the Ray Society*; the duty of reviewing it belongs rather to the comparative anatomist. Still, as the author must be regarded as one of the very highest authorities on osteology in this country, and, with respect to the class *Aves*, one of the very highest anywhere, we cannot fail to record the appearance of a work than which none more meritorious ever left the press. Looking, as we do, upon the internal structure and development of animals as the only sure base of operations whence we can arrive at a final victory over the difficulties of classification, Mr. Parker's unparalleled researches deserve the attention of every systematic ornithologist. It is an unquestionable fact that the originator of the theory that the fore limbs of Vertebrates, by means of the "shoulder-girdle,"

* A Monograph on the Structure and Development of the Shoulder-Girdle and Sternum in the Vertebrata. By W. KITCHEN PARKER, F.R.S., F.Z.S. London: 1868. Folio, pp. 237, pls. xxx.

are articulated to the occiput, had but very slightly studied the osteology of birds. Not much more can be said, even of the greatest of his disciples. But an error once made and publicly proclaimed by a great man, is hard to correct; and though, to our mind, Mr. Parker has completely disposed of this fallacy, we expect it will be long and often repeated. It is one into which no unbiassed ornithotomist would ever have fallen. If we have a fault to find with this book, it is due to the extraordinary caution with which its author has expressed himself on matters relating to classification. It is clear that he is not satisfied with any system of arrangement as yet proposed; for which, indeed, we are far from blaming him. But we think he might, out of the abundance of his knowledge, have given us something more definite than what we meet with. Quaint and forcible though his language often is, he affords us but little direct aid. "As for Birds in general," he declares, "it is hard to say which is the most *Reptilian* group; for I have found the most unmistakable *Lacertian* characters in the noblest aerial types, whilst the *Struthionidæ*, which undergo the least metamorphosis, come as near to the *Mammalia* as they do to the *Reptilia*. In studying the lower half of the thorax and the Shoulder-girdle of the Bird, I shall 'fetch a compass' round the entire class, beginning with the Penguin, and ending with the Ostrich. I do not, however, intend to make merely a 'coast-survey,' but to travel inland also at various points, so as to learn something of the central tribes. In so doing, I must refer the reader from time to time to the territories we have left behind, and occasionally to that towards which we are led through the various highways and byways of the Bird-class. We might, indeed, gain the *Mammalian Class* by a very short route; for we have but to step from the Crocodile to the Ostrich, and from the Ostrich to the *Monotreme*, and we are landed amongst the creatures that 'make their teats naked, and give suck to their whelps'; but this is not the right way, for every finished and noble Bird-type would be left on the right hand and on the left" (p. 142).

Thus everything around us is in a thick fog. Mr. Parker keeps ringing the bell to bid us go at half-speed. Will he not come on board and tell us how to steer our course rightly?

Ornithologists who wish to understand by what means a bird flies, cannot do better than consult the elaborate and masterly treatise of Dr. Pettigrew, lately published in the 'Transactions of the Linnean Society,' which is one of the most valuable papers that have for a long time appeared in the publications of that venerable body*. Many persons would, of course, readily declare that a bird flies by means of its wings; but, to judge from the numerous mistaken theories which have, at one time or another, been given to the world, few would be able to explain correctly the mechanical principles on which the wings act. This Dr. Pettigrew seems to have done most successfully; and we have to thank him greatly for the care he has bestowed on the study. The paper is a long one, and to furnish such an abstract of it as would do justice to the subject is more than is in our power with the limited space now at our disposal. We must simply be content with referring our readers to the essay, which is of the most comprehensive kind. Beginning with locomotion on land, the author goes on to treat of locomotion on and under water, until, arriving at locomotion in air, he considers the phænomena and principles of Flight in the various classes of the animal kingdom endowed with that faculty. We do not profess to be well acquainted with the literature of the subject; but we observe with pleasure the recognition accorded by Dr. Pettigrew to the observations of Captain F. W. Hutton on the Albatros, as communicated by him to this journal (*Ibis*, 1865, pp. 294-298), wherein, if we are not mistaken, the true explanation of that bird's sailing properties was first enunciated. This interesting treatise is most clearly written, and is illustrated by a number of admirable figures.

2. DUTCH.

We have received the Third Part of Messrs. Schlegel and Pollen's work on the Fauna of Madagascar and the neighbouring islands†, which apparently brings to an end the ornithological

* On the Mechanical Appliances by which Flight is obtained in the Animal Kingdom. By JAMES BELL PETTIGREW, M.D. Trans. Linn. Soc. xxvi. pp. 197-277, pls. xii.-xv.

† Recherches sur la Faune de Madagascar et de ses Dépendances, d'après

portion of it. The account given of some of the species is certainly meagre, though no doubt the authors have done their best with the materials at their disposal. The distinctness of the *Hypsipetes* of Réunion is rightly enough recognized, though we should prefer terming it *H. atricilla* (Cuv.)*, to using the so-called name of Brisson, *H. borbonica*. There are thus four species of the genus in this subregion:—*H. madagascariensis* (P. L. S. Müller) (*Turdus ourovang*, Gmel.), from Madagascar; *H. olivacea* (Jard.), from Mauritius; *H. crassirostris* (E. Newton), from the Seychelles; and that above mentioned, from Réunion. The authors, we think, make a great mistake in identifying *Turtur rostratus*, indigenous to the Seychelles, with *T. picturatus*, also occurring in those islands, but introduced thither from Madagascar its proper home. The difference between the two was, we should have thought, convincingly shown in this Journal last year (*Ibis*, 1867, pp. 354, 355). Professor Schlegel persists in regarding *Ardea elegans* as identical with *A. garzetta*, in spite of Dr. Hartlaub's remonstrances (*P. Z. S.* 1867, p. 821), while he now admits *A. idæ* as a fourth "conspecies" of *A. leucoptera*, a compromise he was before unwilling to adopt (*P. Z. S.* 1866, p. 425). It will perhaps be remembered that, on his second visit to Madagascar, Mr. Edward Newton recorded (*Ibis*, 1863, p. 461) that he saw, but could not obtain, a *Plotus*. The Dutch naturalists were more fortunate, and procured a specimen from a resident there, which, singularly enough, proves to be the Indian *P. melanogaster*, and not, as might have been expected, the African *P. levaillanti*,—another most remarkable instance of a connexion between the fauna of Madagascar and that of more eastern regions.

Heer H. C. Millies has found, pasted into a copy of Clusius's well-known "*Exoticorum Libri Decem*" in the library of the High School at Utrecht, an original and very interesting representation of the Dodo, inscribed, "*Vera effigies huius avis WALGH-*

les découvertes de MM. François P. L. Pollen et D. C. van Dam. Mammifères et Oiseaux. Par II. SCHLEGEL et FRANÇOIS P. L. POLLEN. Leyde: 1867. Roy. 8vo. (Livraison III.)

* Cf. Pucheran, *Arch. Mus.* vii. p. 340.

VOGEL (*quæ & à nautis DODAERS propter foedam posterioris partis crassitiem nuncupatur*), *qualis viua Amsterdamum perlata est ex Insula MAVRITII. ANNO M.DC.XXVI.*" followed beneath by "*Manu Adriani Vennij Pictoris.*" Of this figure he furnishes a fac-simile, accompanied by some remarks, in the Eleventh Volume of the 'Transactions' of the Academy of Sciences of Amsterdam; and the whole is also published separately*. After describing the discovery (which appears to have been purchased, in 1758, from the library of Prof. E. J. van Wachendorff), he gives an abstract of the history of the species, and then considers the derivation of its various names. "Dodo," he thinks, with Sir Thomas Herbert, is undoubtedly of Portuguese origin, contrary to the opinion of Strickland. The next matter for consideration is the artist by whom the newly-discovered figure was drawn; and the author identifies him with one Adriaan Pieterzoon van de Venne, who was born at Delft in 1589, and died at the Hague in 1665, being principally known as the illustrator of the poems of Jacob Cats. In addition to all this information, the singular fact is extracted from the archives of the Dutch East-India Company that in 1647 the Governor of Batavia sent a live Dodo (*eene doddaers vogel van't Eylandt Mauritius*) to the Company's Superintendent in Japan†. Finally, Heer Millies announces that a hitherto unknown coloured representation of the bird, ascribed to Pieter Holsteyn, exists now at Haarlem, in the collection of Dr. A. van der Willigen, who, we regret to say, would not permit of its being copied; and also that there is a figure by the same artist "in a bird-book," which the author, however, has not yet been able to see.

3. GERMAN.

Holland, though her navigators did much to bring the bird to the notice of naturalists, is not allowed to stand alone in the prosecution of Dodo-literature this year. In the January num-

* Over eene nieuw ontdekte Afbeelding van den Dodo (*Didus ineptus*, L.) door H. C. MILLIES. Amsterdam: 1868. 4to, pp. 20.

† This old custom of sending live animals from the Dutch settlements to Japan possibly may serve to explain the occurrence in a Japanese Encyclopædia of the representation of a Struthious bird, which we lately noticed (*antèa*, p. 341).

ber of the 'Zoologische Garten,' a periodical which constantly contains much that is of interest to the ornithologist, Herr Pfarrer Jäckel gives (pp. 35-37) an account of "Eine alte Abbildung des Dronte," another portrait, in addition to the many we have, by Roelandt Savery of this wonderful bird, which exists in the well-known picture-gallery at Pommersfelden, near Bamberg. The Dodo, charmed by the music of Orpheus, is here represented as cooling its toes in shallow water; and the liberality of the Inspector of the gallery—Herr Wollenweber, who accordingly deserves the thanks of naturalists,—has allowed the figure to be copied, though we cannot say that the woodcut seems to be a very artistic production. It differs somewhat from the other representations by the same artist in the curiously elevated tail, but, with this exception, has much their look.

In the Zoological Section of the 'Isis' Society of Dresden, Dr. Behn towards the end of last year communicated some remarks on the Dodo; and the same learned naturalist has since published in the 'Leopoldina' an abstract of Prof. Owen's paper on the Osteology of that bird, to which he has prefixed some remarks on its history and added other particulars respecting it which have escaped the notice of previous investigators. The most remarkable, perhaps, of these is the account given by one Volquard Iversen, a Holsteiner, in a work published first at Sleswig, in 1669, and subsequently at Hamburg*, wherein (p. 195) he says that if one caught a Dodo and held it by the leg it cried out, whereupon others ran up to help the prisoner and were themselves taken. A second very interesting statement is contained in a small volume by one Hoffmann† a Hessian, who speaks (p. 52) of "a singular kind of red bird, called 'Toddärsche' and as big as a common Fowl, which though it cannot fly, yet on that account does not run the less swiftly,"

* *Orientalische Reise-Beschreibung* Jürgen Andersen aus Schleswig und Volquard Iversen aus Holstein &c. Schleswig: 1669, fol.; Hamburg: 1696, fol.

† *Oost-Indianische Voyage* &c., Durch Johann Christian Hoffmann, vormahls D. G. W. auf der Insel Mauritius; itziger Zeit Predigern zu Heckershausen. Cassel: 1680, sm. 8vo.

and then goes on to tell of its being attracted by a piece of red cloth and caught by the hand, just as Cauche says of his "Poules rouges." It would appear from this that in Hoffmann's time one common name of the Dodo had been transferred to another species of bird, in accordance with that odd process of substitution which has obtained in so many countries, where the rightful owner expiring bequeaths (as it were) its titles to a survivor.

But of the "Poule rouge" of Mauritius, just mentioned, there is more to be said. In a most beautiful and elaborate publication* Herr Georg von Frauenfeld has just announced a most interesting discovery made in the private library of the late Emperor Francis of Austria. In this library were two volumes containing a series of pictures of various animals, painted in oil on parchment and of considerable antiquity†. One of these pictures represents what is evidently a Dodo, the other a bird of equal or even greater interest. With the limited space at our disposal we cannot give in detail the different steps of the author's argument; it will be sufficient to say that he almost conclusively fixes these paintings on a certain Dutch painter, Hoefnagel by name, who was born at Amsterdam in 1545 or 1546, and shows the extreme probability of most of them having been drawn from living subjects in the *vivarium* of the then Emperor Rudolf II. The Dodo-picture differs from all others that we know of, and is so far very satisfactory, since it acquits the artist, even if the early period at which he flourished did not preclude it, from the charge (which has been made against some others) of being a copyist. It undoubtedly represents a bird whose "visage," in the words of Herbert, "darts forth melancholy;" and no wonder it may, if the author's supposition

* Neu aufgefundenene Abbildung des Dronte und eines zweiten kurzflügeligen Vogels, wahrscheinlich des *Poule rouge au bec de Bécasse* der Maskarenen in der Privatbibliothek S. M. des verstorbenen Kaisers Franz. Erläutert von GEORG RITTER VON FRAUENFELD. Mit 4 Tafeln. Wien: 1868. Fol., pp. 17.

† Our friend Mr. J. W. Clark informs us that very recently he had the pleasure, thanks to Herr von Frauenfeld's kindness, of inspecting these interesting drawings, one of which he recognized as representing *Chiromys madagascariensis*, the Aye-Aye!

be true, that the uncouth original had been deported from its own verdant home and suffered all the inconveniences of a transit thence to Vienna. But the most remarkable peculiarities* it offers are the colour, which is almost entirely of a sooty-brown, and the comparatively long primaries, which are only somewhat lighter in hue than the other feathers. There is a very small remnant of a tail; and the whole appearance is that of a dishevelled and travel-stained bird. It only remains to say of this Dodo, of which an admirable plate is given, that the author thinks it was a female bird, and that from it was most likely derived the portion of the maxilla now in the museum at Prague, which was first made known by Mr. Sclater through Strickland (Ann. and Mag. N. H. 2nd ser. vi. pp. 290, 291) and was subsequently described and figured by Dr. Reuss (Denkschr. k.-k. Akad. Wiss. Wien, x. p. 71).

We pass on to the next figure, wherein is depicted a very singular-looking bird. Great credit, we think, is due to Herr von Frauenfeld for the acumen with which he has recognized in the subject the "Poule rouge à bec de Bécasse" of Cauche, the "Velt-hoender" of Corneliszoon, and the "Hen" of Herbert. It is of a dusky rust-colour, has a somewhat long, curved and trenchant bill, stout serviceable-looking legs, on which it stands firmly planted; but its wings are evidently of no use for flying, and it is apparently destitute of a tail. This remarkable bird the author considers to belong to a new genus, which he calls *Aphanapteryx*, and designates the species *A. imperialis*. He also considers it possible that one of the figures in the well-known Dodo-picture in the British Museum may be intended to represent it. But hereupon we have something further to say. Among the bones of birds recovered from the Mare aux Songes, in Mauritius, along with those of *Didus ineptus*, by Mr. Edward Newton, was an imperfect under mandible, which he was unable to refer to any known species or genus. He submitted

* It may also be noticed that the inside of the mouth is coloured red, as it is also in a picture, by Pierre Withoos, supposed to represent the Didine bird of Bourbon, which has lately been copied in *fac-simile* for the Transactions of the Zoological Society of London (vol. vi. pp. 373-376. pl. 62).

it with the rest of his collection to M. Alphonse Milne-Edwards*; and in a letter which we have lately received from that gentleman he kindly informs us that he has no doubt as to the specimen in question and also a leg-bone belonging to the bird now named by Herr von Frauenfeld as above, but which in M. Milne-Edwards's opinion will have to bear the appellation of *Aphanapteryx bræckii* (Schleg.), as being the same species as that on which Prof. Schlegel (Versl. en Meded. K. Akad. Amsterd. ii. 1854, p. 356) founded his *Didus bræckii*; and we believe it will not be long before the determination of it as an aberrant form of *Rallidæ* is published. It can hardly fail to be gratifying to Herr von Frauenfeld to find his acute suggestion thus confirmed; and in concluding our imperfect notice of this most interesting work we must not omit to say that to it is appended a very full list of papers connected with Dodo-literature which have appeared since that given by Strickland.

4. ITALIAN.

Dr. Salvadori has most kindly forwarded us a copy of a paper communicated by him a few months since to the Royal Academy of Sciences of Turin, wherein are described eight, or perhaps nine, new species of birds collected by the Marchese Giacomo Doria and Signor Beccari in Borneo. These are *Picus (Bæopipo) aurantiiventris*, *Hemicercus brookianus*, *Pitta bertæ*, *Brachypteryx macroptera* (which, says the author, may be *Turdirostris umbratilis*, Bp.), *Alcippe cinereocapilla*, *A. pectoralis*, *Calamodyta doriæ*, *Volvocivora borneensis* and *Cyornis beccariana*. These are all diagnosed from their nearest allies, apparently with great care. Borneo is a large island, and we should like to know from what part of it the new birds were obtained; but nothing is said as to their precise localities.

* From this collection M. Alphonse Milne-Edwards has already described two extinct and previously unrecognized species—one, *Psittacus rodericanus*, from the caves of Rodriguez (Comptes Rendus, lxx. pp. 1121-1125, and Ann. Sc. Nat. 5^e sér. viii. pp. 144-156, pls. 7, 8), and the other a large Coot, from Mauritius, which he has called *Fulica newtoni* (op. proximè cit. pp. 194-220, pls. 10-13). Other discoveries are expected to follow.

5. AMERICAN.

All the ornithological papers of Dr. Coues on which we had hitherto set our eyes had been composed with such elaborate care, that when we heard of his "Monograph of the *Alcidae*" we fully expected to find the subject treated in the same so-called "exhaustive" manner. It was therefore not without great regret that, on examination of this his last Essay, we found it showing evident marks of haste and consequently incompleteness. The author does us the honour (for honour it is *laudari a laudato*) to speak highly of a certain article which formerly appeared in this Journal, and accordingly we feel all the more vexed that we cannot as fully return the compliment on the present occasion. Dr. Coues will, however, bear in mind, we trust, that it is the very excellence of his former labours which has led us to expect more from him than we should from an ordinary writer. He has hitherto set such an admirable example of diligence, perspicuity and accuracy, that we now feel the falling off of these qualities the more. He divides the family *Alcidae* into the three subfamilies *Alcinae*, *Phaleridinae*, and *Urinae* (lege *Urinae*), containing altogether thirteen genera, of which, on the principle, we suppose, of *c'est les extrêmes qui s'attouchent*, *Alca* stands first and *Lomvia* last. It has long been a question what the type of the genus *Alca* was; and our author declares in favour of *A. impennis*, for some recondite reason which we are not able to appreciate. A little investigation will show that Linnæus in naming his genus *Alca* merely Latinized the word "Alk," which is common to most northern tongues, his own among them, and is invariably applied, as of course he was well aware, to *A. torda*. On the principle which Mr. Gurney has lately promulgated in these pages (*suprà* p. 259), a principle which we maintain to be a sound one, it is therefore clear to us that whatever species are to be excluded from the genus *Alca*, *A. torda* must be retained in it, as the one to which the name is especially applicable. What other changes in nomenclature may thus be rendered necessary must be determined by those who are of opinion that the two species we have mentioned cannot be kept harmoniously in the same genus. But how comes it that the suggested name *Gyrvalca* has been over-

looked by Dr. Coues? Is it possible that he has not read that masterly monograph of Prof. Steenstrup which has now been translated both into French and German*? We fear this is the case, as we do not find even an allusion to it. But to return to nomenclatural difficulties, in which this family is scarcely surpassed by any. Dr. Coues restricts *Uria* to the group containing *Colymbus grylle*, Linn., and its allied species, and places the group containing *C. troile*, Linn., in the genus *Lomvia* of Brandt. In the first part of this arrangement he is possibly right; but in the last we suspect he is not. Dr. Malmgren considers (J. f. O. 1865, p. 394) he is justified in referring the birds we commonly know as "Scouts" "Willocks" or "Guillemots" (*pur sang*) to *Alca*; and we think it would puzzle any one to bring forward any valid argument against this association, except that it is an innovation. Dr. Coues draws up antithetically the different structural characters of *Uria* and *Lomvia*; and, by whatever names we speak of these groups, we do not hesitate to say he is quite right in separating them. It seems to us, however, that in defining the species belonging to the former he has not been quite so happy. An attempt in this Journal (*Ibis*, 1865, p. 519) to diagnose four species has escaped his notice; and in refusing to recognize *Uria mandti*, he asserts that it has "been extensively quoted as a synonym of, or employed to designate, *U. columba*," which we humbly think is an error. Certainly neither Brandt (Bull. Sc. Acad. St. Pétersb. 1837, p. 346) nor Bonaparte (*Comptes Rendus*, 1856, p. 774), on whom he chiefly relies, supports his statement. The former makes no mention whatever of *U. columba*, but, giving no *habitat* for it, includes *U. mandti* on Lichtenstein's authority as a good species. Now Lichtenstein (Verz. Doubl. p. 88) refers to Mandt's "*Dissertatio de itinere Grœnlandico*" whence we may fairly conclude, though we have never seen the work, that this last species comes from Greenland, where *U. columba*, admittedly, is not found. Bonaparte on the other hand quotes *U. columba* as a synonym of *U. grylle*, while he also recognizes *U. mandti* as distinct. How, then, can our friend assert, as he does, that this last "name as

* Cf. *Ibis*, 1865, p. 228, and 1868, p. 342.

used by Brandt, Bonaparte, and some others refers unmistakably to *columba*”?*

Dr. Coues allows the so-called “Ringed Guillemot” to remain as a distinct species, though he states that in his opinion it rests only on a character which is probably an individual peculiarity—we should be inclined to go further and say unhesitatingly that it was so. He describes one new species, *Simorhynchus cassini*, which, like all others of the genus, is from the North Pacific, though very little seems to be known of the precise range of each in those waters. Finally, we must once more say that if we cannot speak so highly as we could have wished of this “Monograph,” it is because we are comparing it with its author’s own works.

Dr. Coues has also another paper in the Philadelphia ‘Proceedings’ to be noticed. This is a “List of Birds collected in Southern Arizona by Dr. E. Palmer,” and, while adding four species to those previously known, chiefly through the author’s exertions (*cf.* Ibis, 1867, pp. 130, 131), from the Territory, is also valuable in clearly indicating some differences between the avifauna of the southern desert and northern mountainous portions of the district. The species belonging chiefly to these two portions have their names typographically distinguished; and the paper is a valuable though unpretending contribution to the knowledge of the geographical distribution of North-American birds.

A paper published by Mr. Lawrence in the same Journal towards the end of last year has hitherto been neglected by us.

* It is a pity that Dr. Coues has not named the other authors who do this. So far as we know, Mr. Cassin is the only recent writer to whom the remark applies; but even he (Baird’s B. N. Am. p. 912) does so with doubt. Prof. Schlegel (Mus. P. B., *Urinatores*, pp. 17, 18) of course treats both *U. columba* and *U. mandti* as identical with *U. grylle*. Prof. Reichenbach’s figure (Vollst. Naturg. Schwimmv. pl. 4) mentioned by Dr. Coues we have not seen, but we imagine it would afford but slender evidence either way. Mr. Gray (Gen. B. iii. p. 645) unites *columba* with *grylle* and considers *mandti* distinct.

Herein are described five new species of Central-American birds. Two of them are *Trochilidae* from Costa Rica:—*Glaucis æneus*, very closely allied to *G. affinis*, Lawr., a species common in Panama and New Granada; and *Eupherusa nigriventris*, apparently a very distinct form, having a black breast. *Thaumantias lucie* is another member of the same family, but from Honduras, and said to be allied to *T. linnaei*. The fourth bird described as new is *Dromococcyx ruficularis*, which Mr. Salvin tells us he has little doubt is only the young of *D. phasianellus* (Max.) (*D. mexicanus*, Bp.), a species which certainly does occur in the same country (cf. *Ibis*, 1859, p. 133). The last is *Aramides albiventris*, and is the Central-American race of the wide-ranging *A. cayanaensis*, which it very closely resembles, but from which it differs in the characters pointed out by Mr. Lawrence. It is the common and indeed the only species of the genus found in Guatemala.

XXXVII.—Letters, Announcements, &c.

MR. P. L. SCLATER has kindly put into our hands for publication the following letter:—

H.M.S. 'Nassau,' Ancud, Chiloe,
May 26th, 1868.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have to thank you for your letter of 16th March, which I had the pleasure of receiving a few days ago. I am very glad to hear that my letters have interested you, and that you and Mr. Salvin have written an article for 'The Ibis' on the birds I sent home last year*, and I am much obliged for your hints as to zoological points to be attended to. I will act upon them, as far as my opportunities will permit, during next season, which I think will probably be my last in the Magellanic province. I fear, however, that I may not be able to gain much precise information as to the *Otariæ*, as they will not be easy to procure, and it is next to impossible to make a thoroughly careful examination of such large animals in the very confined space at my disposal in this vessel, as almost the entire room for

* [*Vide antea*, pp. 183-189.—ED.]